

after the dry-neutralizing step, to surface-modify the detergent granules.

B. 1/2
6. (Once Amended) The method according to [3] 16 or [4] 17, further comprising the step of adding a liquid component after the dry-neutralizing step.

8. (Twice Amended) The method according to [claims 3 or 4] claim 16 or 17, wherein said liquid acid precursor of a non-soap, anionic surfactant is a linear alkylbenzenesulfonic acid obtained by a SO₃ gas sulfonation method.

B. 1/2
9. (Twice Amended) The method according to claim [3] 16 or [4] 17, wherein an amount of an inorganic acid preexisting in the liquid acid precursor of a non-soap, anionic surfactant is 0.09 mol or less per mol of said liquid acid precursor of a non-soap, anionic surfactant.

B. 1/2
10. (Twice Amended) The method according to claim [3] 16 or [4] 17, wherein said inorganic acid is sulfuric acid or phosphoric acid.

sub C2
B3
13. (Twice Amended) A high-bulk density detergent composition having a bulk density of 500 g/L or more, comprising the detergent granules according to claim [1] 14 or [2] 15, or the detergent granules obtainable by the method of claims [3] 16 or [4] 17.

Please add the following new claims:

BP
14. (New) Detergent granules comprising a non-soap, anionic surfactant and an inorganic salt undetectable by x-ray diffraction method, wherein the molar ratio of (inorganic salt undetectable by x-ray diffraction method)/(non-soap, anionic surfactant) is from 0.1 to 1.0, and wherein the non-soap, anionic surfactant is contained in the detergent granules in an amount of 28% by weight or more and less than 50% by weight.

15. (New) Detergent granules comprising a non-soap, anionic surfactant and an inorganic salt undetectable by x-ray diffraction method, wherein the molar ratio of (inorganic salt undetectable by x-ray diffraction method)/(non-soap, anionic surfactant) is from 0.3 to 1.0, and wherein the non-soap, anionic surfactant is contained in the detergent granules in an amount of 15% by weight or more and less than 28% by weight.

16.(New) A method for producing detergent granules, comprising the step of dry-neutralizing a liquid acid precursor of a non-soap, anionic surfactant with a water-soluble, solid, alkali inorganic substance, wherein a dry-neutralizing step is carried out in the presence of 0.1 to 1.0 mol of an inorganic acid per mol of said liquid acid precursor of a non-soap, anionic surfactant, and wherein the resulting detergent granules contain the non-soap, anionic surfactant in an amount of 28% by weight or more and less than 50% by weight, and have a molar ratio of (inorganic salt undetectable by x-ray diffraction method)/(non-soap, anionic surfactant) of from 0.1 to 1.0.

17.(New) A method for producing detergent granules, comprising the step of dry-neutralizing a liquid acid precursor of a non-soap, anionic surfactant with a water-soluble, solid, alkali inorganic substance, wherein a dry-neutralizing step is carried out in the presence of 0.3 to 1.0 mol of an inorganic acid per mol of said liquid acid precursor of a non-soap, anionic surfactant, and wherein the resulting detergent granules contain the non-soap, anionic surfactant in an amount of 15% by weight or more and less than 28% by weight, and have a molar

sub
C3
ratio of (inorganic salt undetectable by x-ray diffraction method)/(non-soap, anionic surfactant) of from 0.3 to 1.0.

18.(New) The detergent granules according to claim 14 or 15, wherein said granules are obtainable by dry-neutralizing a liquid acid precursor of a non-soap, anionic surfactant, with a water-soluble, solid, alkali inorganic substance in the presence of an inorganic acid.

19.(New) The detergent granules according to claim 14 or 15, wherein said granules are obtained by dry-neutralizing a liquid acid precursor of a non-soap, anionic surfactant, with a water-soluble, solid, alkali inorganic substance in the presence of an inorganic acid.

REMARKS

Upon entry of the present amendment, claims 5-10 and 13-19 will remain pending in the above-identified application and stand ready for further action on the merits.

The amendments made herein to the claims do not incorporate new matter into the application as originally filed. For example, claims 14-17 are based on prior claims 1-4 but have